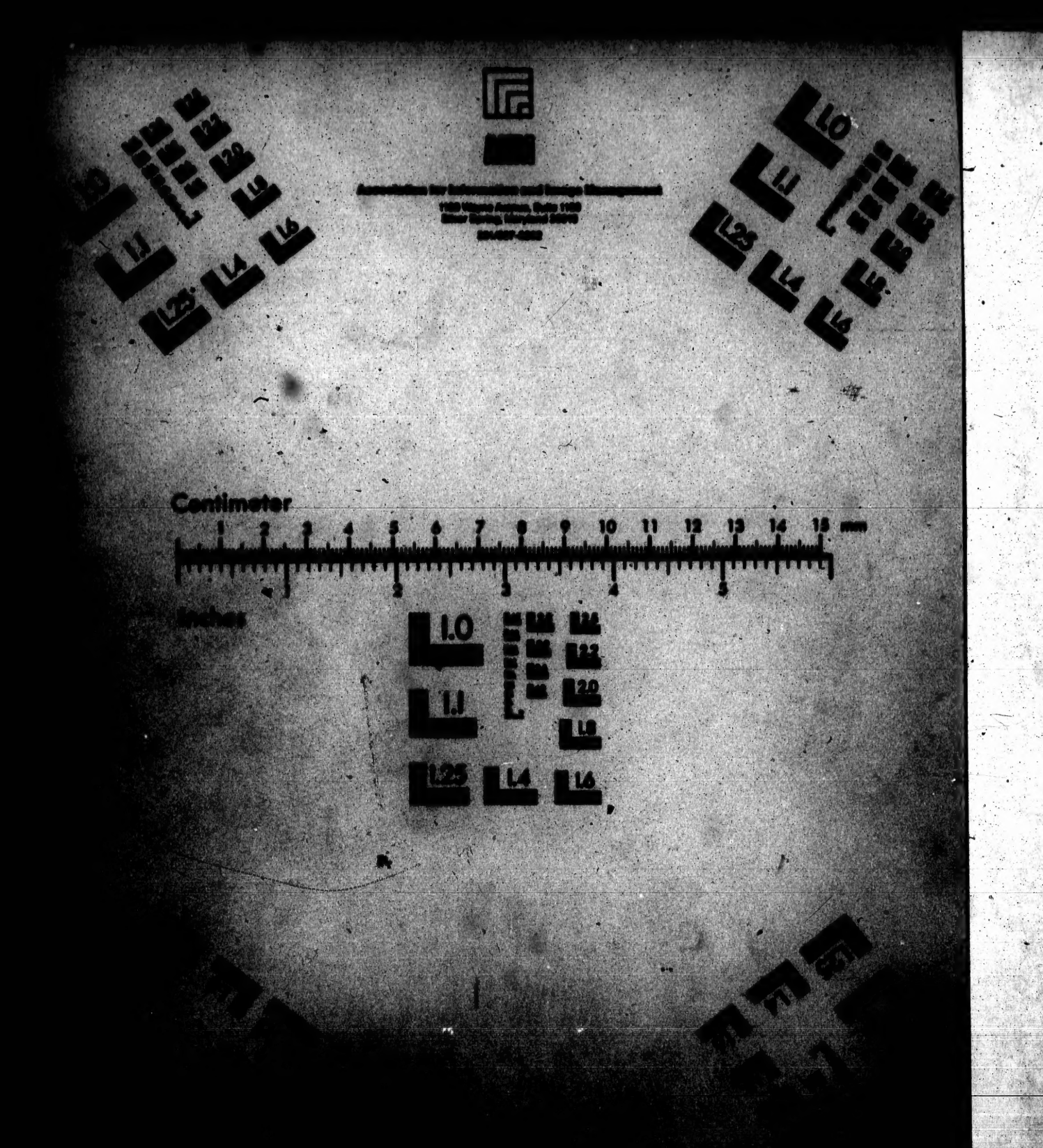
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PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

CANADA CONFERENCE

IN THE CASE OF

HENRY RYAN,

FORMERLY A MINISTER IN THE

METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

ADDRESSED,

IN A

PASTORAL LETTER,

TO THE

Members of said Church,

BY THE

COMMITTEE

APPOINTED FOR THAT PURPOSE.

KINGSTON:
PRINTED BY STEPHEN MILES.
1828.

TO THE

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TO THE MEMBERS OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN UPPER CANADA.

Dear Brethren,

THROUGH various sources you have learned the dissatisfaction of Mr. Ryan with the proceedings of the Canada Conference. These were expressed as well in various printed Circulars, as in his verbal communications, both public and private.

The complaints of Mr. Ryan having been frequent and loud, you might have expected from your Pastors an earlier explanation of the proceedings of their Conference in his case. But they were charitably hoping that angry feelings would subside, and besides, they were unwilling to introduce publickly, the failings of a Brother who had been esteemed as a Minister among us. The continued complaints, then, and the severe censures of Mr. Ryan, are the occasion of this reply, and the only apology we have for addressing you on a subject so peculiarly delicate and painful.

By the following statements of the proceedings of the Conference, you will perceive how much they have laboured to afford Mr. Ryan satisfaction, and whether he had well grounded reasons for accusing the Conference with either "injustice" or "oppression." The statements of the case must necessarily be concise, confining our details to the principal points which more immediately relate to Mr. Ryan's case. To notice all that has been referred to for several years past, would swell our letter to a length, which you might have neither time nor patience to peruse.

Our Brethren having been often appealed unto by Mr. Ryan, and the Conference having deemed it expedient to lay this subject before them, have appointed the following Committee for the purpose, viz.

Wm. Case,
Wm. Ryerson,
F. Metcalf,
J. Richardson, and
E. Ryerson.

These are instructed to draw their statements from the journals of the Conference, with such explanations as they may judge proper, in order to a right understanding of those points, on which Mr. Ryan has so frequently given you his comment.

We do not learn that Mr. Ryan has complained of being ill treated previous to the Salt Fleet Conference in 1825.

The following facts appear to have given rise to a controversy, which this Conference found it expedient to examine.

Soon after Mr. Ryan and Mr. Madden took their stations from the Bathwell Conference of 1824, the one as Missionary to the

"Grand River falls, &c." and the other in the Niagara District, Mr. Ryan made some statements to several persons which were supposed were against the influence of Mr. Madden. Some of these strictures were directed against the domestic economy of Mrs. Madden, and particularly, with reference to the dress of her children. Another statement was, that he, Mr. Ryan, had "agreed with Mr. Madden, when at Hallowell, to furnish Madden with a house," when he should remove to the Niagara District: and intimating an improvidence in Madden's settling his family in Niagara Village. This statement Madden said, was incorrect: Mr. Ryan had made no such *agreement* with him. In conversation together afterwards, the same assertions and denials took place between them, the one *affirming*, and the other *denying* any such *agreement*.

Mr. Culp, who was present at this dispute, having previously heard of the statements of Mr. Ryan about Mr. Madden, and believing it improper for one Preacher to take such liberties with the feelings of another, especially in a publick manner: he then informed Mr. Ryan that he should bring the subject before the Conference, and notified him to prepare for trial.

It is proper here to premise, that, according to general usage in our Conferences, no person is to be put upon his trial before the Conference, without previous and timely notice. The case must be *peculiar* and *urgent*, where complaints are permitted to be named, without such notification: and even then the Conference does not proceed upon the trial, without the consent of the accused. We are now speaking of charges of an immoral nature. In cases of *improprieties* only, those improprieties are mentioned in the Conference with a view of correcting the infirmities of a Brother. But then, the offending brother must first be conversed with; and the case must be an extraordinary one, where, even *infirmities* are permitted to be named, without this gospel step being first taken.

The Conference of 1826 came on, and in the usual course of examination into the characters of all the Preachers, Mr. Madden's character was first called up. When the question was asked by the Bishop, "Is there any thing against brother Madden?" Mr. Ryan arose and preferred several charges against Mr. Madden. On inquiry, it was found that this was the first time Mr. Madden had heard that charges were to be brought against him: neither the charges, or notification that there *would* be charges, were given him till they were presented before the Conference. For this reason, proceedings were at first arrested, until, by the consent of Mr. Madden, Mr. Ryan was allowed to proceed in the prosecution. The trial proceeded, and decision was made accordingly.

The character of Mr. Ryan was next called up, when Mr. Culp proceeded in his charges; one of which was, that, Mr. Ryan had "made erroneous statements, injurious to the character of Mr. Madden."

The Conference now proceeded in the investigation of the sever-

al items; during which various and lengthy evidences were examined on both sides. Mr. Ryan, in order to support the statements which he had publickly made, laboured to prove that he (Ryan) had entered into such an *agreement* to "provide Madden a house."

A question now arose, whether Mr. and Mrs. Madden's evidence should be admitted? the subject was referred to the the Chairman, who gave it as his opinion, that their statements ought not to be rejected, at the same time, he observed, that "it was doubtful whether their evidence ought to amount to anything." Their statements were given in, which went to say, that no agreement was made about providing a house, and that, on a certain occasion, Mr. Ryan "acknowledged that there was no such *agreement*."

Another charge of Mr. Culp's against Mr. Ryan, contained the following specifications, viz. 1st. Leaving his stationary appointment at the Grand River falls. 2d. Entering into the Ancaster and Niagara Circuits. 3d. Forming Societies, and taking up collections therein.

It appeared in evidence, that the "Falls" were specifically named in his appointment—that the settlement was entirely destitute of any ministry,—that the prospects were encouraging,—but that, he left the people abruptly, and never visited them again.

After hearing all that could be said on the subject, and the parties, Mr. Culp and Mr. Ryan, were about to withdrew, Mr. Ryan made objections to Mr. Madden's keeping his seat, while the Conference proceeded to make up their decision. Mr. Madden insisted on his *right* to keep his seat, lest it should be urged as a *precedent* hereafter, in other cases. At the same time he declared, that he would neither speak nor vote on the occasion.

The Conference,* in their decision, appear to have taken into consideration a report which was in circulation, "that Mr. Ryan had been guilty of falsehood;" as also Mr. Ryan's attempt to prove that there *was* an *agreement* between him and Madden.

The decision of the Conference was as follows.

1. It does not appear, from the evidence before the Conference, that there *was* an agreement between Mr. Ryan and Mr. Madden, relative to Ryan's "procuring a house" for Madden.

2d. There does not appear sufficient evidence to convict Mr. Ryan of falsehood; at the same time, according to the evidence, there appears to have been wanting, on the part of Mr. Ryan, a proper caution, and correctness in making his statements on the subject.

3d. That the Bishop, in pronouncing the decision of the Conference, be requested to inform Mr. Ryan, that the manner in which he made his statements respecting the "House," gave occasion for Mr. Madden to think that he, (Ryan) intended them against his (Madden's) influence: and that whatever *was his intention* (of

* Such were the circumstances of the case.

which the Conference does not seem to judge,) he ought, in future, to be more cautious."

Of the second charge, the decision on the several items, was as follows:

1. That Mr. Ryan, in leaving his appointment at the Grand River fully so abruptly, was guilty of unfaithfulness in this respect.

2d. Not supported.

3d. Dismissed from the Conference.

The parties being now called in, the Bishop, after pronouncing the decision of the Conference, proceeded affectionately to "advise the parties in his addressing all further controversy,—to retire from the Conference in friendship, to endeavour to maintain harmony and peace, in future; and to say no more about these unpleasant matters among the Brethren." A motion was then made, that the Conference do highly approve of the advice just given, and further advise that nothing further be said on the subject, and that if inquiries are made about these misunderstandings, we will say "they are settled." The motion being put by the Secretary, it was carried unanimously, with one exception.

Mr. Ryan requested a superannuated station, which was granted by the Conference. It was now hoped, that from the pains which had been taken to adjust these unpleasant differences, there would be no further strife. And though from the circumstance of Mr. Ryan's not voting for the above motion, it was apparent that he was not satisfied; yet, reflection, it was believed, would overcome feelings created by the occasion, and dissatisfactions would die away.

In the following Spring, however, (1826) a printed circular was issued, under the signature of "A Methodist." This was extensively circulated through the societies in different parts of the Province. Though the author hid himself under a false signature, yet he publicly impeached several persons by name, and neither Bishop, nor Conference, nor its Secretary, escaped his severity. Among the false insinuations of this anonymous production, was this, that the vote which the Conference passed, to drop all differences, and say nothing more about them, was designed by the Conference to *secrete their proceedings*, lest their acts, of which they were doubtful, should come to light. On the whole, the Circular was very censorious, and highly inflammatory.

These papers were forwarded to great numbers of persons, by mail, some of them the distance of 300 miles, subjecting those who received them to heavy postages. The effects produced by this singular measure, were various: some, judging from the statements in the paper, thought the Conference and the persons named in the circular, were much to be blamed, and were highly prejudiced against them. Others were disgusted, that a subject, of which they had no concern, should be palmed on them without their solicitation, and then taxed with postage, in the bargain. Others of a vulgar character, seized on the opportunity of ridiculing religion,

and reading the defaming statements through their neighbourhood. But to the pious it was a source of much pain and grief; and the more judicious put the papers immediately aside, or committed them to the flames.

The Conference, in September 1826, was held in Hamilton, New-Castle District. Here Mr. Madden's character being under the usual examination, Mr. Ryan made some remarks, but preferred no charges. Explanations were given on both sides, but as no charges were preferred, the subject was dismissed.

During this Conference, the subject of the late anonymous circular was taken up; the same being read, the following resolutions were passed in reference to it.

Resolved, 1. That this Conference has read with much concern, an anonymous letter, signed, "A Methodist;" and that it is the opinion of this Conference, that the design of the author was to make a wrong impression on the minds of the people in general, and on the Methodists in particular, in this province; and to destroy the confidence and union which now exists between the preachers and the people. 2d. That this letter contains misrepresentations and false statements respecting the proceedings and decisions of the annual Conference of 1825. 3d. That it contains insinuations and false insinuations and statements respecting several responsible members of that body. 4th. That the Conference view with abhorrence, the unchristian and invidious manner in which the author attacks and endeavours to injure the character and reputation of several respectable members of the Conference of 1825. These resolutions, the Conference directed should be read to the Official Brethren in the quarterly Conferences.

As the author of the circular had made his statements without giving any proof, therefore, all the Conference thought proper to notice of this singular production, was, to contradict the assertions, and give their opinion of the design of the author. Nor did the Conference deem it necessary to go abroad for proof, in a matter, all the particulars of which, they were themselves acquainted with. Almost every member of the Conference had personal knowledge of the facts alluded to in the Circular, and knowing them to be falsely stated, they needed no further proof.

The next Conference was held at Hamilton Village, District of Gore, September, 1827. When Mr. Ryan's character was called, inquiries were made by several Brethren, relative to another printed circular, of which it had been reported Mr. Ryan was concerned. This was also under the guised name of "A Lover of Truth." Several resolutions were offered successively, the purport of which was to induce Mr. Ryan to give the Conference satisfaction, whether, or not, he was the author; all of which were lost, on the ground of seeming to require a person to criminate himself.

Mr. Ryan, in his Address to the Conference, having expressed

unmeet denunciation, and in language strong and emphatic, the Conference proceeded to pass the following resolutions.

1. That a Committee be appointed to examine the contents of a late circular, implicating the conduct of a preceding Conference, and to report thereon.

2d. That the same Committee be authorized to investigate the cause or causes of Mr. Ryan's grievances with the Conference, or with any of its members, and to report thereon.

And, that Mr. Ryan might be convinced of the disposition of the Conference to do him justice, and obviate every plea of "partiality," a 3d Resolution was passed, to allow Mr. Ryan a choice in that Committee. The Conference having appointed two Brethren, Mr. Ryan selected other two. The brethren of Mr. Ryan's choice having named the fifth man, their nomination was agreed to by the Brethren chosen by the Conference.

The Committee now consisted of the following persons:—FRANKLIN METCALF, JAMES RICHARDSON, THOMAS WHITEHEAD, JAMES JACKSON, and EZRA HEALEY.

A great deal having been said about Mr. Ryan having evidence to prove that Mr. Madden's statements at the Salt-fleet Conference were erroneous, it was expected that he would now produce it. But Mr. Ryan laid in no charges against any individual, nor produced any such evidence, though a fair opportunity was now afforded to do so, if he had any such to produce; for in the appointment of that Committee it was expressly stated, that they were to "take into consideration any grievances of Mr. Ryan," not only "against the Conference," but against "any of its members."

This Committee, after a laborious examination of Mr. Ryan's complaints, reported, which report, as amended and adopted by the Conference, was to this effect:—

That Mr. Ryan appeared before them, and stated the following grievances—

1. That the Salt Fleet Conference suffered Brother Culp to stand complainant in a charge of Brother Madden's, and thereby allowing him (Madden) to be evidence in his own case.

2. That the Conference, instead of acquitting or criminating him in their decision, in effect said, that he (Ryan) had not proved himself clear.

3. That after the Conference had heard his defence, and he had retired, they allowed Madden to remain in while they made up their decision.

4. That when Mr. Culp brought a charge against him for entering into the Ancaster and Niagara Circuits, preaching, forming societies, and taking up collections therein, and he had proved himself clear, the Conference, instead of acquitting him, threw it out.

On these alledged grievances of Mr. Ryan, the resolutions of the Committee, as amended and adopted by the Conference, were to the following effect, viz.—

That in none of the items of complaint, had Mr. Ryan any occasion for grievance, with the exception of the 3d., where Mr. Madden was allowed to be present (though he neither spoke nor voted) while the Conference were making up their decision.*

The Committee further reported on the "Circular," which report as amended and adopted by the Conference was to this effect.—That they had carefully examined the late Circular signed "A lover of truth," and found it to be in their opinion, an attempt to degrade the character of the Conference, in the minds of the Brethren and the public in general—that its tendency is to alienate the affections of the Brethren from their Ministers, and to sow discord and divisions in the Church.—That the circular contains false insinuations and uncharitable reflections, particularly in the following instances.

1. In charging the Salt-fleet Conference of 1825, with being guilty of "partiality."

2d. In charging the Bishop with exercising arbitrary power.

3d. By asserting that the Conference of 1826 resolved that the first circular contained false statements "without the least shadow of proof."

4. By representing that the Conference were doubtful of their own acts, &c.

5. In representing that the Conference "Sent their resolutions by the hand of those men whose iniquity it was designed to cover," &c.

The examination of Mr. Ryan's character being resumed, Mr. Case arose and said he could not feel that he had discharged his duty to the people among whom he laboured, without mentioning the late circular, signed "A lover of Truth," and which had occasioned so much ill will in several parts of his charge—that it was the belief of many that Mr. Ryan was concerned in its publication. This was his own impression. He considered the contents of that circular highly reprehensible. He thought if Mr. Ryan was concerned in it, he ought to be accountable therefor; but if innocent, the proof of his innocence would remove suspicion. But so long as such things were allowed of, there would be no end of troubles in the Church.—There should be a check to conduct so unchristian, and calculated to do so much evil to society.

Some observations were then made, that the accused should have previous notice. Mr. Case explained. He said that some of the circumstances had come to his knowledge since the sitting of the Conference. He had expected that the subject would have been further examined by the Committee, and so have been relieved from the painful duty of introducing it to the Conference. But as this had not been done, he felt it his duty to mention it.

To obviate any inconvenience to Mr. Ryan, it was proposed that the affair might be hereafter examined by a Committee. But to

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* See page 5.

this Mr. Ryan objected, as that would carry his trial beyond the General Conference, now just at hand: and thereby deprive him of an appeal to that Conference, should he be brought under censure. He would rather his case should now be examined. A Committee was therefore appointed to examine the subject and to report to the Conference. The Committee sat, and the subject was laid before them in the following words:—"W. Case complains that Brother Ryan has been concerned in the circulation of a certain Circular, signed "A lover of truth," by which means excitements and commotions have been created, injurious to the cause of religion, and wounding to the feelings of our people." The Committee reported that as Mr. Ryan was willing to submit to the trial, they recommended the Conference to receive the charge.

In the process of the trial, a lengthy examination of evidences took place, in which it appeared that these papers, published about January, 1827, were highly charged with language of abuse against the two preceding Conferences, falsely stating their proceedings, and publicly impeaching, by name, individual members of those Conferences*—that great numbers of these papers had been forwarded to different parts of the Province, some by mail, enclosing the former Circular, and to persons neither members of our church nor professors of religion—that in several places these inflammatory papers were injurious in their effects in neighbourhoods and families. They promoted angry feelings, and excited even threats against the Conference and its members. It further appeared that quantities of these papers were scattered along the settlements at the time Mr. Ryan passed down the country through the Cobourg and Hallowell circuits,—that the excitements were the most where most of these Circulars were spread, and where Mr. Ryan spent the most of his time,—that in the Niagara circuit, these papers were found scattered along the road where Mr. Ryan had just past,—that in several places they were found in the door yards in the morning, after Mr. Ryan had passed in the evening. It furthermore appeared, that Mr. Ryan had those papers with him in his journeys,—that he read them, and handed them to sundry persons,—that in one instance he attempted to read one of these papers to a family, but was requested by the pious females *not to do it*, as the master of the house made no profession of religion,—that persisting in his design to read it, they again forbid it, when he desisted; but in a few days one of the same papers came by mail, addressed to the master of this family. It also further appeared, that Mr. Ryan having handed one of these papers to a person, he proceeded to justify its contents.

Several of those letters were produced, which had been directed to different persons, and which were stated as the "opinion" of the evidences, that they were Mr. Ryan's writing, some in his natural

* See p. 9 of this letter.

hand, still some disguised. One of these letters, which Mr. Ryan himself selected, he proved, before the Conference, to be the hand writing of another, but it so happened that he knew exactly where to find the man who wrote it.

After considerable discussion, the Conference came to the decision, by a small majority, that "The charge is not supported by evidence."

The session had now continued till late in the evening, and the members were wearied; and as some further remarks were about to be made on the subject, a member hastily moved, that "Mr. Ryan's case be dismissed from the Conference," which carried immediately.

On reflection, the next morning, it appeared to many of the members that the vote the preceding evening had been hasty. It placed Mr. Ryan in a different situation from every other member: others were liable to further examination—*his* was now beyond the reach of inquiry. It was therefore proposed to rescind the vote of the preceding evening, and when a resolution passed to that effect, Mr. Ryan immediately arose, and declared himself "withdrawn," and "renounced the authority of the Conference."

Several Brethren were requested, by the Conference, to wait on Mr. Ryan, and to endeavour to dissuade him from his purpose; but persisting in his design to withdraw, it was voted that Mr. Ryan be considered withdrawn, and that his name be so returned in the minutes of the Conference.

Mr. Ryan now addressed the Conference at some length, in friendly terms, declaring his intentions to maintain peace, and promote union in the church. He hoped his conduct would convince his Brethren that this was his design, and that when we obtained the SEPARATION, the door would be opened for his return, if he should desire it.

Such were the friendly professions of Mr. Ryan; and such were the *returns of good will* on the part of the Conference towards him, that, notwithstanding he had declared himself withdrawn, he was invited to retain his seat, and even allowed to vote, during the remainder of the session. The fact is a singular one, that Mr. Ryan, having chosen rather to withdraw from the church than to be liable to further examinations, with the advantages of an appeal to a numerous and entirely disinterested body of ministers, in the General Conference; and that having declared so positively his *peaceable and friendly intentions*, with an intimation of returning after the separation, and knowing, as he did, the established rules and usages of the church to which he belonged; we say, having thus chosen his own course, made such assurances of peace, and knowing the established order of the church, it is quite extraordinary that he should immediately attempt to make the *Conference a party* in *his* controversy with a few individuals of its members, and *more* extraordinary that he should attempt to bring his controversy before a

tribunal entirely unknown in the church. Still more extraordinary indeed, that he should conceive the wild design of bringing a Conference of forty ministers to an account before a tribunal of twelve lay men! But this was Mr. Ryan's next plan.

At the late Conference held in Ernest Town, October 2d, was received from Mr. Ryan a proposal, with petitions to support it, purporting to be an *offer* that Mr. Ryan and the Conference should choose, each, six lay members, or ministers, to whom the differences between him and the Conference should be referred; and that their examination and decision should be open and final. The papers containing this proposal were referred to a committee of the following persons, viz. W. Chamberlayne, Andrew Prindle, William Brown, James Richardson, and Franklin Metcalf, who were instructed to take into consideration the above papers, and to report thereon. The report of this committee was, That they had examined the papers and petitions submitted to them, and were of opinion that the Conference could not concede to Mr. Ryan's proposals. 1. Because they were not sensible that the Conference had done Mr. Ryan any injustice. 2. Because he voluntarily left the Conference, and disowned their authority. 3. Because, that after he withdrew from the connexion, there remained nothing to be settled between him and the Conference. 4. Because, if any member of the Conference had injured him, either before or since he withdrew, our Discipline prescribes the proper and only legal course of prosecution and trial; consequently they do not feel themselves at liberty to submit to a form of trial so unprecedented and unconstitutional in itself, as his proposals contain.

Finally, the committee recommend that a proper address be made, by a pastoral letter, to our friends on this subject.

The Report was adopted by the Conference:

A motion was now carried, that if Mr. Ryan have any further proposals for the Conference, that he be requested to make them in writing. Mr. Ryan then handed in the following: "If the Conference will rescind that vote which was the cause of my withdrawing, I will give them a pledge in writing, that I will agitate nothing among the people respecting former difficulties; provided they will give me a written pledge, that their members shall not, with impunity, attack my character. On that principle I propose that former differences, by both parties, come to an end."

"H. RYAN."

To this the Conference did not think proper to concede.

It appears to have been the endeavour of Mr. Ryan to lead the community to believe that the Conference, who had examined a charge brought against one of its members, had become a party in a quarrel with that member, and that they were wishing to oppress, persecute, and ruin that member. This is the ground of most of his appeals. The *Conference*, he pretends, *is the cause of all these*

difficulties! In reference to these unfounded assertions, the Conference now passed the following resolution:

"The Conference cannot but call to their painful recollection, the troubles which have been created in the church for several years past; and though they regret to have it to say, that they consider Mr. Ryan accessory to those troubles, as well as the author of public impeachments of the preachers and the Conference,—And though, for various reasons, they cannot accede to his proposals; yet, whenever he shall publicly recall those misrepresentations, they recommend that he be again received to the fellowship of the church."

Mr. Ryan having requested a copy of *this last resolution*, the Conference voted that the Secretary furnish Mr. Ryan with the whole proceedings of this session in relation to him.

Thus, Brethren, we have given you a statement of the proceedings of the Conference in the case of Mr. Ryan, together with such explanations as Mr. Ryan's frequent comments on those proceedings seemed to require. In concluding our remarks, we beg leave to ask, wherein does it appear that the Conference has shown a disposition to "*oppress*," to "persecute," and "destroy." Let us review several circumstances of which Mr. Ryan most complains. He says. Mr. Madden's statements in the Conference were untrue. Now wherein does this appear? He has produced no evidence to that effect, though every opportunity was afforded him to do so at the Conference of 1827. In his controversy with Mr. Madden, it appears that Mr. Ryan was the aggressor. He began by *meddling* with Mr. M's domestic economy, and impeaching the females of his family. Now what had Mr. Ryan to do with Mr. M's family? He had no pastoral charge of them. Had he been *their* minister he might have been more in his place, and even then, it did not become his profession to go *abroad* with his censures upon a defenceless female, and one too who had just arrived—a stranger in the country. Whether Mr. Madden *did* exercise all that forbearance which he might have done, had he possessed less regard for his rising family, we do not pretend. But you know the men, and may judge whether Mr. Ryan would have taken it more kindly, had Mr. M. made the same remarks about *him* and *his* family. It is certain that Mr. Madden made no complaint to the Conference, and probably would not have done it; but another who laboured under no delicacies of *personal* concern, came forward in *behalf of the church*, that the evil might be corrected.

The Conference has refused none of the complaints of Mr. Ryan against any of the preachers. They have examined very minutely all the specifications of his charges, and of charges against him, and after hearing all the evidence and pleas on all sides, have given their decision, to the best of their knowledge, leaving the subject open for an appeal to the General Conference. The Conference has granted Mr. Ryan the appointments he asked for, granted a

committee to investigate his "complaints against the Conference or any of its members," and gave him a choice in that committee, a majority of whom, were in fact, virtually of his own choosing.—That after the mass of evidence on the subject of his being "concerned in the circulation of the circular;" so careful were they, not to criminate a member, where they judged the charge was *fully and pointedly* supported, and with a *sufficient* number of evidences to *criminate an Elder*; we say after all the evidence, (see page 11) on the subject, they decided that the charge was not supported by evidence. Does this look like persecution or oppression? what *jury* would have said the charge was not supported by evidence?

A compliance with Mr. Ryan's proposals would involve a direct violation of our Discipline, neither can it be said that a new tribunal is necessary, where the provision is so ample, as that of the "trial of men by their Peers," and especially with the right of appeal which our Discipline provides for in all cases.

If Mr. Ryan says that he was not able to meet the expense of attending the General Conference, we would observe, that Mr. Ryan is not a poor man. He is in comfortable and easy circumstances, more so than any of his travelling Brethren, *with one exception*, and forty dollars would have covered the whole expense, even by public stage. To concede to Mr. Ryan's proposals, would establish a dangerous precedent, and open the way for endless confusion in the Church. Every dissatisfied person, (for Mr. Ryan's case is not peculiar,) might refuse to abide the decision of his brethren, whether of *Conference or Class*, make his Conference or Class a "party in a quarrel," and then wish to call them to account before a *new and unknown* tribunal. Whoever heard of business done in such a manner, either by Parliament, or Conference?

He complains that Mr. Madden was "allowed to keep his seat in the Conference while they made up their decision." Well, and this the Conference acknowledged, that he had cause of complaint. But how did *this* effect his case? Nothing at all, for Mr. M. neither spoke nor voted on the subject. Mr. M. *did* indeed insist on his right to keep his seat, and how far he was right in this may be perceived, when it is well known that the example is found in the most popular and best appointed assemblies. Evidence is even called from among the members of the House of Commons, and afterwards are allowed to retain their seats, and vote too in the same case.

Mr. Ryan complains that one item in a charge was "thrown out." Was this of such importance? An item is thought of little consequence, and is therefore "dismissed from the Conference!" Where is the criminality in this?

He complains that the Conference of 1826 "passed resolutions on the Circular signed 'A Methodist,' without any proof." No such thing—see this subject in page 7.

Mr. R. complains that a charge was allowed to be brought a-

gainst him for being "concerned in the Circular," without previous notice. But that complaint was not pursued without his consent.* Mr. R. certainly ought not to complain of a procedure of which he has been more than once guilty. At the Conference of 1825, he preferred many charges against his Brethren, to whom he had given no previous notice. See page 4.

Is the same thing such a crime in others, which is perfectly harmless in himself? and when he himself had set the example? And besides, the circumstances were different. Mr. Ryan could not be ignorant that the subject would be examined into. His knowledge of men and business must have suggested to him, that something *must* be done to put a check to such nefarious schemes. He well knew who was "concerned" in those inflammatory papers, and who had created those disturbances at Hallowell, and elsewhere. And he *must* have known, that the author *would* and *must* expect to meet it at his Conference.

Mr. R. complains that *Mr. Case* presented the complaint. We would ask, who else *should* complain? It was in the bounds of Mr. Case's own charge where the disturbances had been made. If any blame should be attached to Mr. Case, it must be that of suffering the author to pass and repass through his District so often without calling him to an account, as the Discipline directs; and we can scarcely account for his neglect in this part of his duty, only for the reason which he assigned in the Conference, when Mr. R's case was under examination, "That Mr. R. was the first preacher with whom he commenced his ministerial labours,—that he had long been associated with him in the work of the ministry. It was therefore that he felt it exceedingly painful to say any thing on the subject."

What would Mr. Ryan himself once have done? what *did* he do in a similar case? we all remember the days and the complaints of Jeffers. We do not say that the case alluded to, did not require a prompt and vigorous course, such as Mr. Ryan pursued. But we mention it to shew what Mr. R. has undergone in his views, in the lapse of a few years. It is generally observed, that those, who are fond of dealing heavy blows upon others, are often the first to *cry out*, if they are made but barely to feel the *switch* themselves.

Whether this remark may be applicable to Mr. R. or not, we trust he may yet see that he has reason for admiring the *forbearance* of his brethren, rather than for complaining of their *severity*.

Mr. R. complains that the proceedings of his brethren against him have arisen from prejudice, on account of the part he took in the separation. That many of his brethren disapproved of the *extraordinary measures* which he pursued in that business, may be true enough:—*measures* and *statements*, of which the Committee feel some delicacy about mentioning at present; but which may hereafter be

* See page 10.

named, if *necessary*. But that they could refuse to do justice to Mr. Ryan in their Conferences, on that or any other account, is an insinuation as ungenerous and ungrateful, as it is untrue. Mr. R. cannot have forgotten the *labour and concern* of his brethren in his behalf, at the Hallowell Conference, as well as the easy manner in which they were disposed to overlook improprieties at that Conference. These circumstances, as well as the fact, that the Conference *has been active and successful* in bringing about the separation in an *honorable and peaceful* manner, are a sufficient refutation of Mr. R's assertion.

How *imperceptibly*, but *certainly*, does one error make way for another, and where one false principle is fostered, how fruitful a source does it become of danger and calamity. Perhaps the whole of Mr. R.'s present misfortunes and perplexities may be traced to this source. Mark the following fact—Mr. R. conceives the idea that there are great corruptions in the Church. He immediately commences an attack on ministers, Conference, members, male & female. He now conceives the design of escaping the contamination by withdrawing from the church, and only wants a fair opportunity. This at length arrives. His conduct is called in question, as being concerned in the circulation of a certain scurrilous circular—evidences are produced, he escapes, barely—but fears, and withdraws.

And what are those dangerous "corruptions?" why one of them is, that our young ministers are more studious than some of their elder brethren have been. Mr. Ryan's *intelligent* friends will hardly thank him for naming this objection. And what dangerous effects are produced? The state of the church, like that of a tree, is known by its fruits. What calamities have occurred in the church from the *intelligence* of her ministers? Are our congregations lessened? No, Hundreds are brought under instruction, where once but few attended. Is the word less powerful to affect the heart and mend the life, than formerly? The improving manners of society—the increasing religious knowledge—the extensive revivals—the conversion of the Indians,—All these facts are so many proofs of Mr. R.'s erroneous views on this subject.

It was believed, by many, at the late Conference, that Mr. R. had no serious thoughts of returning—that his "PROPOSALS" were merely a *manoeuver*. And now that his "DEFENCE"* (as he has

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* Mr. Ryan's pamphlet having just come to hand, we barely notice it, and if, on reflection, any material part should need any further notice, it may hereafter appear.

We will however, take occasion to say, that Mr. R's *charge* that the members of society, and "some of the preachers, are fond of the bottle," appears like the effusions of spleen, rather than the effects of *grief*; and further, that where the preachers are known, *his statements will not be believed*.

Mr. R. well knows that the "Preachers" are ever ready and

the modesty to call it,) has appeared, there remains no further doubt on the subject. The reasons there assigned, i. e. the "CONSUMPTIONS of the church," if he believes it, must operate to prevent a wish to return, [illegible] influence him to withdraw. And what degree of remorse [illegible] he has felt, for years, towards his brethren, are [illegible] from his writings and his [illegible] in public and private, and yet Mr. R. blames the Conference for rejecting his proposals.

There was one circumstance at the late conference, which the committee feel they can apology is due: Mr. R. was not allowed to address the conference, when he made his proposals. But it may be remembered that they had much important business before them: they have read Mr. R.'s documents, they had been detained before with his difficulties, four or five days at one time, two or three at another; and besides, the strain of his address, [illegible] much in the language of his writings, often abusive, and [illegible] not wish to hear them.

The committee having now completed a task, which to them has been very painful, they submit the subject, with this affectionate advice, "Beware of divisions." Take no rash step which may lead to them, and which may end in mortification to those who may be concerned in them. Let your neighbourhoods and societies be free from collisions, following the peace of the Gospel, and the devotions of love and piety. To a faithful minister, nothing is more painful than to see society divided and thrown into *disorder*. They feel it their duty to preserve peace in their flocks, and they earnestly intreat their brethren to be watchful. But if, after all, any should resolve to follow the fortunes of Mr. Ryan, in a separate party, we cannot help it, though we are aware of the consequences.—The results of former factions are before us. If any proceed in this they must bear their own burdens.

We are Brethren, affectionately yours,
In the bonds of the Gospel,

W. CASE,
W. RYERSON,
F. METCALF,
J. RICHARDSON,
E. RYERSON.

York, Dec. 1828.

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prompt to caution and warn against the prevailing vice of intemperance; nor do we know of any cases of intemperance, where inquiry has not been made according to discipline.

We cannot tell who Mr. R. means to implicate in this insidious charge. It is presumed he did not mean it for *his right hand man*, as he mentions "some of the preachers;" we know of no such preachers; if Mr. R. does, he would do well to inform the Church, in a proper manner, who they are.